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# Start of a new relationship

## Clinton's visit to SA should herald a new trade-based link with the US

US President Bill Clinton's visit to Africa will broaden Americans' awareness of Africa as a whole. **RICH MKHONDO** of the Independent Foreign Service reports from Washington

**H**ILLARY Rodham Clinton said her husband's trip to six sub-Saharan Africa nations would go a long way to broaden Americans' awareness of the need to engage with Africa by moving from Cold War-era African dependency on aid to a relationship based on trade.

In a briefing to African journalists at the White House, she said her husband's tour of Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana, Senegal and Rwanda would highlight America's post-Cold War interest in the continent's people and launch a partnership founded on common commitment to democratic principles and universal respect for human rights, economic growth, and mutual security.

Clinton will be accompanied by about 700 US officials, lawmakers, businessmen and 300 journalists.

"The trip will represent a very strong statement of commitment on behalf of the US to our relationship with and in partnership with Africa. We believe Africa should be fully integrated into the global community," she said.

While in South Africa from next Wednesday to Sunday, Clinton will meet President Mandela and other leaders. He will also address parliament and visit Robben Island. Plans are under way for him to visit Soweto and other areas while he is in Johannesburg on Saturday

before travelling to Botswana.

With Clinton's visit, the first American president to make a state visit to sub-Saharan Africa since Jimmy Carter in 1979 and the first to come to southern Africa, there are growing expectations of increased US involvement in the region.

### Message

"We want to send a clear message here in the US that we have a very strong interest in developing strategic economic trade investment and other kinds of partnership with

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# INSTITUUT VIR EIETDSE GESKIEDENIS

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Africa. We want to send a clear message to African countries that we believe in the future of Africa," Mrs Clinton said.

She said her husband's trip has been boosted by the upcoming legislation linking US trade, development and aid to democratic and free-market reforms, a strategy designed to encourage self-reliance in Africa. It would relieve debts and promote investment for nations that "reform." That means opening markets, holding elections, and cutting government spending - steps that can cause economic pain in poor countries.

Also at the briefing was Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice.

"We must accelerate Africa's full integration into the world economy. As the global village shrinks and nations forge closer economic ties, Africa must not be left behind," she said. "There are bright spots on Africa's horizon. Economic growth is on the upswing. Nations are liberalising their economies and beginning to reap the benefits of free markets and economic reform."

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